

Subject: First-of-its-kind public interest lawsuit vs The New York Times in vindication of the First Amendment

Date: 3/22/2006, 3:45 AM

From: Elena Ruth Sassower <judgewatchers@aol.com>

To: medianews@poynter.org

Organization: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc.

To: Jim Romenesko


The New York Times is being sued for libel and journalistic fraud in a landmark public interest lawsuit, the first to implement the powerful recommendation for media accountability proposed in the 2003 law review article, "*Journalistic Malpractice: Suing Jayson Blair and the New York Times for Fraud and Negligence*", 14 Fordham Intellectual Property, Media & Entertainment Law Journal 1.

Attached is the press release about the lawsuit – also posted on the website, www.judgewatch.org, accessible via "Latest News" and "Suing The New York Times".

Please circulate – including to the faculty of the Poynter Institute.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)
914-421-1200

 press-release-3-22-06.pdf (99KB)

CENTER for JUDICIAL ACCOUNTABILITY, INC.*

Post Office Box 8220
White Plains, New York 10602

Tel. (914) 421-1200
Fax (914) 428-4994

E-Mail: judgewatch@aol.com
Website: www.judgewatch.org

Contact: Elena Ruth Sassower, Director
Direct E-Mail: judgewatchers@aol.com

P R E S S R E L E A S E: March 22, 2006 onward

FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND PUBLIC INTEREST LAWSUIT vs THE NEW YORK TIMES IN VINDICATION OF THE FIRST AMENDMENT

The New York Times is being sued for libel and journalistic fraud in a landmark public interest lawsuit, the first to implement the powerful recommendation for media accountability proposed in the 2003 law review article "*Journalistic Malpractice: Suing Jayson Blair and the New York Times for Fraud and Negligence*", 14 Fordham Intellectual Property, Media & Entertainment Law Journal 1.

The lawsuit, charging The Times with betraying its First Amendment responsibilities to the public, is brought by the Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) and its director, Elena Ruth Sassower. The libel causes of action are based on a Times' column, "*When the Judge Sledgehammered The Gadfly*", about Ms. Sassower, then serving a six-month jail sentence in D.C., after conviction on a "disruption of Congress" charge. An analysis of the column, annexed as Exhibit A to the Verified Complaint, demonstrates that the column is "deliberately defamatory", "knowingly false and misleading", and "completely covers up the politically-explosive underlying national and New York stories of the corruption of the processes of judicial selection and discipline, involving our highest public officers".

These public officers include Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, running for re-election to the U.S. Senate this year, with an eye to the presidency in 2008, and New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer, running this year to be New York's next governor. The Verified Complaint alleges that their anticipated landslide victories are being rigged by The Times, whose steadfast refusal to report on the records of Ms. Clinton and Mr. Spitzer with respect to judicial selection and discipline is with knowledge that such reporting would rightfully end their electoral prospects, if not generate disciplinary and criminal prosecutions against them for corruption. As for past electoral races, the Verified Complaint dramatically shows that The Times rigged Senator Charles Schumer's 2004 re-election to the Senate by similarly refusing to report on his record as to judicial selection and discipline, and, prior thereto, rigged Mr. Spitzer's 2002 re-election as attorney general and Governor George Pataki's 2002 and 1998 re-elections as New York's governor, likewise by refusing to report on their records.

The Times' protectionism of all these public officers -- and its suppression of any coverage of the *readily-verifiable* documentary evidence of systemic governmental corruption involving judicial selection and discipline, provided it by CJA throughout the past 15 years -- underlies the lawsuit's cause of action for journalistic fraud.

The Verified Complaint, its substantiating exhibits, and the law review article are posted on CJA's website, www.judgewatch.org -- accessible *via* the sidebar panel, "Suing The New York Times".

* The Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) is a national, non-partisan, non-profit citizens' organization working to ensure that the processes of judicial selection and discipline are effective and meaningful.